



## ADDRESSING POVERTY, INEQUALITY AND UNEMPLOYMENT THROUGH A CAPABLE DEVELOPMENTAL STATE

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### SUBMISSIONS

The triple challenges that Namibia faces - poverty, inequality and unemployment - commonly found in former colonies, requires a capable developmental state. A state that is interventionist in character, actively involved in the economy and prioritizes industrialization. It is a state characterized by a competent bureaucracy and underpinned by a meritocratic system. A state in which the capable and those with capacity gets the job, not the one that shouts the loudest. This is a state whose leadership has an ideological hegemony for a country's developmental trajectory. Your excellency, we urgently need a developmental state. Here are suggestions on how we can address these triple challenges.

#### *Modikwa Manufacturing (Pty) Ltd*

The neoliberal forces may tell you that it is our small private sector that will create jobs and that as political leaders we must only cut ribbons and deliver speeches at their events. This lazy approach is fatal and discredited. We must actively get involved as a state in the economy. Our footwear/shoes imports surpass more than 5 million pairs per year, costing more than N\$ 700 million. Our mining industry alone employs more than 18 000 people. The police have more than 10 000 members and our defence has more than 10 000 members. These three categories alone take us to close to 50 000. If each of these employees/members require two pairs per year, then 100 000 pairs are required annually. At present, all these pairs are imported. This does not include security guards, construction workers, municipality workers, cleaners and others.

If the government establishes its own shoes manufacturing factory, say **Modikwa Manufacturing (Pty) Ltd**, it can contribute to dealing with unemployment without difficulty. After setting it up, a mere directive from the President and/or Minister of Defence, Police and that of Mines will lead to this state owned company to have guaranteed income. Currently, millions going to South Africa, Netherlands, Germany, UK and China for shoes. Our money creates jobs in other countries.

This model can create more than 1500 direct and indirect jobs for our youth. We can establish this factory to revive an employment zone that once existed in Damaraland at a place called Uis, in existence since 1922 or Oshikango that was once an Export Processing Zone before it was left for ruin. All it requires is your instructions and the rest will be fall in place like the falling leaves of Autumn.

### *Model for Free Higher Education*

The successes of developmental states such as China, Botswana, Mauritius and Singapore is also owed to free education. We need to educate our children freely not through loans. Here is how we can create a self-sustaining free education model. We do not need foreign funds to educate our children. We simply need to introduce an education fund similar to how social security operates. If the 500 000 employed Namibians each contribute N\$ 50.00 and their employers do the same, we will have N\$ 50 million per month and N\$ 600 million per year. If this fund is left untouched during a two years' inception period, it will be about N\$ 2 billion. The state can contribute N\$ 5 billion to the fund during the same inception period. In the third year, we will be able to provide free education to our children. We can demonstrate further details on this model if necessary. All it requires is a law. When passed, the econometrics will follow.

### *Cape Fria as a New City*

By 2041, in less than 16 years, Windhoek will have more than 800 000 inhabitants. Around 10 000 people migrate to Windhoek every year. Solving Windhoek problems without having regard to these demographic realities and patterns is fatal. A courageous dog can chase a moving vehicle barking endlessly but in the fullness of time, it will discover that it will not catch up.

As evil as they were and are, our oppressors sat down and designed our oppression. The Odendaal ideas of the mid to late 1960s became a plan before a Commission was established followed by a law. It is no accident that places are known as clustered (Shandumbala) while others are Pioneers (Pioneers Park) and Highland (Hochland Park). We live in dark corners (Donkerhoek) while others are in Academia (for academics) with streets name after Aristotle and Plato while our children played in "Sin" and "Lucifer" streets. Our oppressors took social engineering seriously.

We didn't create a single city in 35 years. Only villages were upgraded into towns without serious and purposeful urban design. At most, these poorly conceived proclamations were upgrades of existing trade centres of local communities. Let us plan a new Namibian city from an idea, plan to action. Unlike cities planned under colonialism, ours should be one designed with love, African ingenuity and progress in mind. A city planned by a free people. Let's establish it at Cape Fria in the Kunene region. It will be a logistical hub through our new port, beautiful beaches and sceneries, rich cultural tourism and other special economic zones.

In October 1995, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad birthed an idea of Malaysia's third city, Putrajaya. By February 2001, it became the country's third city. Abuja

in Nigeria is another planned city built in the 1980s and replaced congested Lagos in December 1991. In both Nigeria and Malaysia, the conditions were exactly the same as in Namibia and Windhoek.

### *Agricultural Interventions*

We notice your keen interest in agriculture. This sector's potential has been strangled by colonial laws and practices protected by the government. I will not even talk about the 1896 Redline. How else does one explain that it is the largest employer but only contributes 6% to our country's GDP? We have less than 15 000 hectares of land under agricultural irrigation. The government green scheme combined are probably less than 8 000 hectares. At the same time, the amount of hectares given to the Chinese to produce drugs in the Zambezi region, 10 000 hectares, surpasses government green schemes combined. We need to put at least 100 000 hectares under irrigation to realize agriculture potential beyond slogans. There are many interventions we can do. By mere directive, it can be made a condition that successful bidders for food supply tender to schools, prisons and hospitals source food from local producers so that we cut imports. The state can enforce uptake agreements through procurement systems. For this to happen, food must first be produced. We can only hope you are moving in this direction and our suggestions are to help you.

## QUESTIONS

### *Decades of select few Apartheid beneficiaries*

Your Excellency, when you went to exile you were tired of oppression probably the same way some of us are tired of the continuity of colonialism 35 years after independence. You paid the **Price of Freedom** because there was a **Promise of Freedom**. You didn't go into exile for colonialism to continue under you. 51 years ago, in 1974, **M.T Alberts** was appointed as Deputy Sheriff. He is still Deputy Sheriff for Kunene today. 36 years ago in 1989, **J.A Puleston** was appointed as Deputy Sheriff. He is still Deputy Sheriff for four (4) northern O regions and Kunene, in 2025. **Andre Visser, D.G Van Wyk, D. Pretorius** and **M.J Hannes** were appointed as Deputy Sheriffs in 1992. They are still Deputy Sheriff in 2025 for Erongo, Hardap and Khomas, 33 years later. **P.W Van Heerden** was appointed Deputy Sheriff in 1994 and in 2025 he still remains Deputy Sheriff for //Kharas region 31 years later. **B Van der Westhuizen** was appointed Deputy Sheriff in 1995 and 30 years later he remains a Deputy Sheriff.

The Deputy Sheriffs are appointed in terms of section 30 of the High Court Act by the Minister of Justice. All these years, the Vissers, Van Heerden, Van der Westhuizen, Van Wyk and others were always appointed without an advertisement or open competition in a democratic society, a society for which you went in exile for. It was understandable when the Apartheid regime appointed them in 1974 and 1989 respectively, but on **what basis does the democratic government continue with the same oppression and sustaining it for 35 years? For how long will this oppression and corruption continue, worse within a system that ought to ensure justice and fairness?**

The reality is that there is nothing special that these individuals do that cannot be done by the many graduates of law. There is nothing complicated about serving documents and holding auctions. Many competent black lawyers are in the street because of these practices

that the government continues to sustain, the very practices rooted in Apartheid racism and the colonial project. In fact, because of many law graduates that are unemployed, a motion was tabled in the 7th Parliament calling for a limitation in the enrollment of law students. **When are we ending this colonial practice and stopping this secret tender so that every qualifying Namibians can get an opportunity especially law graduates?**

#### *Small Claims Court*

Access to justice remains a challenge that is acknowledged by both ordinary people and our justice system itself. The government and the judiciary created a **Commercial Court**, a court for the rich, solving disputes of the rich faster. To access this Court, your dispute must involve millions. This Court was established on the recommendation of European bodies. Recently, an **Environmental Crimes Court** was also established to deal with Rhino horns and other wildlife crimes that Europeans are unhappy with. We now hear that there are plans to establish a **Tender Court**. While all these initiatives for the rich are taking place, calls for a **Small Claims Court** fell on deaf ears. A person owed N\$ 1 500.00 by another is asked to pay N\$ 2 500.00 just to see a lawyer. Who can pay 2 500 to recover 1 500? A bill actually exists, drafted 20 years ago, but was never passed. **Your Excellency, is it wrong for ordinary Namibians to see the Judiciary as working for foreigners, the rich and those in power? When is the small claims Court coming? When is the Court for the poor coming?**

#### *Namibian Dollar linkage to South Africa*

In April 1990, then government owned Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit (NEPRU) organised a workshop to discuss the monetary independence for Namibia. Namibia's Finance Minister Otto Herrigel and Governors of Central banks in SADC joined. He made it clear that the pegging of the Namibian dollar to the South African rand was to last for a few months. 35 years later, it still remains. South African challenges continues be domesticated here at home. **What is the plan to bring fiscal sovereignty and end the unpredictable and over reliance on South Africa? What if the right wing forces one day take over South Africa and delink their Rand? How are small countries like Lesotho and Swaziland, who are more linked to South Africa than us, are managing with their own currencies?**

#### *The ICC, Fitch and Moody Payments*

Namibia's agony with the International Criminal Court (ICC) has been heard broadly at home and abroad. In your previous role, you have been an embodiment of this agony particularly how this institution has been utilised to the detriment of the Africans and other smaller nations. **Why is it that when we are struggling with resources we are still going to give more than N\$ 1 million to the ICC in this current budget? Shouldn't we use this money for other pressing needs of our people?** We are also paying more than N\$ 2 million to two American companies, Moody and Fitch. Why are we paying these neoliberal companies with public resources? Even if they were important, which we doubt, **why don't we chose one instead of paying two private companies that does the same job?** It must be recalled that Moody contributed to the 2008 global financial crisis and Fitch is a private company owned by the Hearst family. We need to ensure financial prudence both in words and actions and stay away from speculative activities.

## **SLEEP WITH ONE EYE OPEN**

Those who do to learn from history are bound to repeat past mistakes. I sincerely hope you learn from your predecessors whom you know better than we do. You need to sleep with one eye closed and the other one open. With due respect, we advise that a country is different from the activities of a political party. From President Nujoma we learn that you need to implement your vision yourself instead of hoping that your predecessors will do it. This point was made by President Pohamba recently. Your successors do not necessarily owe you continuity. Implement and where you can't plant seeds you are sure of germination. President Nujoma wanted the National Youth Service (NYS) to orientate our youth and ensure that all of them undergo a national youth service. Today the NYS a Security guard company and deals in grape sales. President Pohamba slept with all his eyes closed and when he woke up he had a mess of TIPEEG and Mass Housing. The corrupt and greedy are skilled at singing praises to the leader and posturing as the most caring. When the curtain falls, they move to the new currency leader without hesitation. How many TIPEEG and Mass Housing millionaires remember President Pohamba's birthday let alone visit Okanghudi? President Geingob loved mega announcements, "prosperity" this and "prosperity" that. "No one must feel left out" and "shacks gone in 5 years". Your excellency, we advise that you avoid catchy phrases, slogans and mega announcements instead do the work. If not, in the fullness of time, these become your legacy.

We hope to one day tell our children that we made these submissions to Meme Netumbo on 24 April 2025 and she implemented. We will also tell them if nothing happens. President, we will support you to do good for our country and its people. Without fear whatsoever, we will equally stand up against you and the modikwa team when and where you do wrong. May the God of our people and our ancestors guide and be with you in your task and indeed as you prepare the seat for your son in 2030.

**I thank you.**